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Provisional Guidance for Transcribing Foreign Language Material in UEB

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Content of This Publication

Introduction

The rules of Unified English Braille (UEB) allow a range of approaches for transcribing foreign language text. These methods result in braille that is appropriate for a variety of types of texts as well as for different groups of readers. Full details are given *Rules of Unified English Braille*, Sections 13 and 14.

BANA recommends four general methods that should be suitable to cover the majority of cases. This document will briefly explain each of these methods and indicate the circumstances for which they are most appropriate. The examples and some of the language used in this document are from the UK Association for Accessible Formats (UKAAF) document, "Transcribing Foreign Language Material in UEB" and used with permission.

In general, follow the *Braille Formats: Principles of Print to Braille Transcription, 2015* when creating foreign language texts.

Method 1. UEB Accents and Contractions in Anglicized Words

English has adopted many words that contain accent marks. In Method 1, any foreign words or phrases that are commonly used in English and include accented letters are transcribed using the standard UEB rules regarding modifiers found in Section 4 and Section 13 of the UEB Rulebook. In this case, follow the rules found in sections 4.2 and 13.5 for use and spacing of letters and their accent marks.

Method 1 is appropriate when encountering the occasional foreign word or short phrases, names, and titles that occur in the books, magazines, cookbooks, and other material commonly written in English. This method is especially appropriate for readers who are not likely familiar with the special foreign language signs used in Methods 3 and 4 below.

This is the preferred method for foreign language transcriptions and aligns with the guidelines discussed in *Braille Formats: Principles of Print-to-Braille Transcription, 2015*. However, in the case of extended pieces of foreign text (e.g., a whole paragraph), it is permissible to transcribe using uncontracted braille. See Method #2.

> **Examples of Method 1:**
> I would like a *salade niçoise* and a *crème brûlée* please.
>
> ⠠⠊ � ⠇ ⠁ ⠘⠇⠎⠁⠇⠁⠙⠑ � ⠈⠝⠊⠯⠕⠊⠎⠑� ⠯ ⠁
> ⠘⠉⠗⠌⠍⠑� ⠃⠗⠹⠇⠘� ⠏⠇⠑⠁⠎⠑⠲
>
> Thomas Mann: *Joseph in Egypt (Joseph in Ägypten)*, 1936
>
> ⠠⠹�⠁⠎ ⠠⠍⠁⠝⠒ ⠘⠚⠕⠎⠑⠏� ⠔ ⠠⠑⠛⠽⠏⠞
> ⠈�⠚⠕⠎⠑⠏� ⠔ ⠠⠈�⠛⠽⠏⠞⠑⠝⠈� �<⠼⠁⠊⠉⠋

My fiancé will play Alain: Le Jardin suspendu for organ; Lubos Sluka: Via del silenzio; Eben: Mutationes for large and small organ; and Kuchar: Menuet. Tomás Thon (organ).

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Method 2. UEB Accented Letters and Uncontracted Words

Using Method 2, it is permissible for any foreign words or phrases that include accented letters and punctuation to be transcribed into uncontracted braille following UEB Rule 13.2.1. This method would be appropriate for educational materials for younger students who may benefit from seeing such words without contractions.

First, determine if the word or phrase must is actually foreign. Often foreign terms will be shown in a different typeface, but a dictionary can also be consulted to see if the term is English or not. English words included in the expression should be uncontracted as well.

Use the UEB signs and accent marks as indicated in the UEB Rulebook, Sections 4.2 and 13.5. The grade 1 indicator and code switch indicators are not used.

Examples of Method 2:
The announcement started: *Lord Byron era un poeta muy conocido*.

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The word "demonstrate" comes from the Latin **demonstrare.**

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Method 3. Using Foreign Language Signs for Accented Letters

In this method, follow Section 13.6 in the UEB Rulebook. The foreign language signs for accented letters are used as needed in foreign text, though all other signs (e.g., punctuation) may be in UEB. Neither foreign contractions nor UEB contractions are used in foreign words, though UEB contractions are used in surrounding English words.

In the normal use of this method, UEB code switch indicators are not inserted for the accented letters. For this to be viable, the distinction between English text and foreign text needs to be sufficiently clear from the context(e.g., format or font change) so that the foreign accented letters are unlikely to be mistaken by the reader for UEB contractions or other signs. See UEB Rulebook Section 13.7.2. In cases where there is likely to be confusion, UEB code switch indicators can be used at that specific point. However, this should be regarded as the exception when using this method.

The advantage of this method is that the resulting foreign text is generally "smoother" and more natural to read because it avoids the need for multi-cell accent indicators and code switch indicators which can be disruptive if frequent. This method can also provide a useful steppingstone to the type of braille used in a specific country.

Method 3 is appropriate for the foreign text in foreign language school textbooks, foreign language school assessments, foreign language grammar books and phrase books, bilingual dictionaries (e.g., English/French), etc. It may also be appropriate for foreign language literature in which the document is written entirely in that language.

For cases in which foreign language phrase books are expected to be used by casual users (e.g., for vacations abroad), it may be more appropriate to use Method 1 or Method 2 because they do not require the reader to know or to be informed of special braille signs.

Examples of Method 3:

[A French textbook question:]

6. Finish your postcard by writing
    Amitiés (Best wishes)
    or *à Bientôt* (see you soon)
    or *Affectueusement* (love)
    and sign your name.

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[A German bilingual dictionary extract. The pattern for entries will be established for the whole dictionary – it is clear that the entry word is German without indicators:]

länden *vt* (*dial*) *Leiche* to recover (*aus* from)
Landenge *f* isthmus

[An example advertisement from a French school textbook:]

** **STUDIO À LOUER**
Lyon, centre ville (75 rue de la République), 4e ét. chauffage individuel à gaz, coin cuisine, douche, meublé. Loyer mensuel €900 avec charges comprises. Tél. Delarue 888.73.25

Method 4. Using the Full Foreign Language Braille Code

Method 4 uses the full braille code of a specific country. This method requires the transcriber to be fluent in the specific language and to know the braille code for that language. UEB code switch indicators (non-UEB indicators) should normally be used where foreign text is mixed with English text in UEB. However in some cases, where the use of foreign language code is clear, the code switch indicators are not necessary If the foreign language braille code includes contractions (e.g., French or German), then there is an option to use or not use such contractions, depending on the expected readership of the braille.

Method 4 is appropriate for foreign language literature (i.e., text entirely written in that language), where the readership is expected to be familiar with the foreign code. It may also be appropriate for other material for these readers, where the switching between English and foreign text is clear cut and does not require the frequent use of code switch indicators.

Examples of Method 4:

[Part of a German tourist leaflet in uncontracted German braille:]

* Neue Startzeit beim **Köln-Marathon**

Erstellt 03.02.2014

Die Marathonläufer beim Köln-Marathon 2014 haben einen kurzen Tag: statt wie bisher um 11:30 Uhr erfolgt der Startschuss über die 42,195 km bereits um 10 Uhr.

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[From the beginning of Don Quixote, transcribed to contracted Spanish braille:]

Y era la verdad que por él caminaba. Y añadió diciendo:

- Dichosa edad, y siglo dichoso aquel adonde saldrán a luz las famosas hazañas mías, dignas de entallarse en bronces, esculpirse en mármoles y pintarse en tablas para memoria en lo futuro. ¡Oh tú, sabio encantador, quienquiera que seas, a quien ha de tocar el ser coronista desta peregrina historia, ruégote que no te olvides de mi buen Rocinante, compañero eterno mío en todos mis caminos y carreras!

Languages in Non-Roman Scripts

Languages in non-Roman scripts such as Greek or Russian may be treated by either Methods 2, 3 or 4. Note, however, that the use of code switch indicators will probably be more often required in this case because the change to foreign text might not be accompanied by other font changes (e.g., to italics or bold) as are often used to distinguish foreign language text in Roman script. Also note that UEB signs should not be used within the scope of code switch indicators (i.e., passage or word indicators). Thus, if it is intended that UEB-specific signs are to be used in conjunction with non-Roman script, care should be taken that they lie outside the scope of any code switch indicators used.

Example of Language in Non-Roman Scripts:

[Greek script enclosed in non-UEB passage indicators.]

E.g. ἔλεγε κακον τι, 'he was saying something bad.'
But τι κακον ἔλεγε; 'what bad (thing) was he saying?'

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Old English

The transcription of Old English is covered in the *Rules of Unified English Braille*, Section 12. In brief: Old English letters (e.g., thorn þ and eth ð) are included as signs within UEB, and code switching is not used.

Standard Usage for Educational Materials

Note that the guidance given in this document is not intended to exclude other valid approaches where needed, as explained in the *Rules of Unified English Braille*, Sections 13 and 14. However these guidelines are meant to create a degree of commonality of approach for the majority of cases so that readers have a familiarity and confidence in the style of the braille they read.

This is especially important for educational materials. A standard for published educational materials should follow the guidelines given in this document. In summary, the following methods are recommended for published educational materials:

- **Method 1** should generally be used for foreign words, phrases, names, titles, etc. occurring in the majority of books, assessments, and other material typically written in English.

- **Method 3** should generally be used for the foreign text in foreign language school textbooks, foreign language school assessments, foreign language grammar books and phrase books, bilingual dictionaries (e.g., English/French), etc.

- The specific guidance in the UEB Rulebook on Languages in non-Roman Scripts or Old English should be followed in those cases.

Reference for Foreign Language Braille Codes

For information on foreign language braille codes, refer to *World Braille Usage, Third Edition*, available for download from the web site of the Perkins School for the Blind: www.perkins.org/worldbrailleusage. This publication lists accented letter signs for various languages as used in Methods 3 and 4, as well as braille signs for non-Roman scripts, such as Greek and Russian. It also includes some common punctuation marks as used in Method 3, though transcribers will usually need to refer to the full foreign language braille code produced by a given country for complete information needed for Method 3 or Method 4.

References:

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UKAAF (2012). Transcribing foreign language material in UEB. Retrieved from http://www.ukaaf.org/braille/ueb (Foreign Language Guidelines)

UNESCO (2013). *World Braille Usage.* National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress. Retrieved from http://www.perkins.org/international/world-braille-usage